Access
News on WorkSafeBC products, programs, and services
January 2006

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Simplified online service

Now, it's easier to report payroll and make your payment

At WorkSafeBC (the Workers' Compensation Board), we're finding ways to make it easier for you to do business with us. That's why we're launching a simplified version of Internet payment and payroll reporting — a new application that you can use to complete transactions without having to sign up for our full range of online services.

If you're like most small business owners, you have very few claims in your workplace. You report payroll and make payments to WorkSafeBC only once a year. That means you probably don't need access to numerous online services to complete transactions with us, nor do you want to set up an account online.

What you do need is fast and easy access to make your payments and report your payroll online. Our new Internet application is designed with those particular needs in mind. It will be launched in early 2006, just in time for you to file your Employer Payroll and Contract Labour Report.

Once you've logged onto the application, simply enter your account number and the payroll report ID printed at the top of your report. From there, you can report your payroll figures for the year, make a payment by credit card (if it's less than $5,000), and view your account balance.

Fast, simple, and easy.

Look for this new service at **WorkSafeBC.com** in the near future.

Registration initiative levels playing field for B.C. businesses

Most businesses in B.C. are registered with WorkSafeBC (the Workers' Compensation Board) and the Canada Revenue Agency. Like you, they pay their share of workplace insurance premiums, take responsibility for safety in the workplace seriously, and contribute to Canada's tax base.

Some employers, however, haven't come forward to register with the CRA or WorkSafeBC. This is unfair. It gives these employers a competitive advantage and unduly burdens all other business owners who pay their taxes and fund the workers' compensation system.

Through an agreement recently signed between the Canada Revenue Agency and WorkSafeBC, our province's business community will soon achieve greater equity. The agreement enables WorkSafeBC and the CRA to exchange information — such as contact details and payroll figures for businesses in B.C. This way, we can identify firms that are not registered with both agencies and inform them of their legal requirements.

By ensuring that employers are registered as required, we are meeting our responsibility to the employers and workers of B.C. — that is, to achieve a level playing field for B.C.'s business community while ensuring employers and workers are well-protected against workplace injuries and have access to expert advice on health and safety matters.

The exchange of information between the CRA and WorkSafeBC meets the legal requirements under freedom of information and privacy legislation.

For more information about the registration initiative, visit **WorkSafeBC.com**. For information about the Canada Revenue Agency's registration requirements, visit the CRA web site at **www.cra.gc.ca** or call the CRA Business Window at 1 866 432-6349.

Our web site has a new look!

If you've been to our web site, WorkSafeBC.com, recently, you may have noticed a few changes. Our web site is undergoing a transformation to make it easier for you to do business with us and find the information you need.

Based on feedback from hundreds of employers and workers, we've made the site more user-friendly, dynamic, and interactive.

Here are some of the new features you'll find:

- A new section on the home page called "Doing Business with WorkSafeBC" that links you directly to key tasks and information
- A new navigation bar at the top of each page that's consistent across all parts of the site
- A new accident awareness area on the home page that provides timely updates about serious accidents and fatalities
- An area for current news and announcements
- A new "quick links" area on every page
- More multimedia elements like video streaming and audio slide shows
- Increased use of graphics and colour
- Plain language

These changes provide a wealth of information to help you maintain a safe workplace, meet your obligations under the *Workers Compensation Act*, and manage all aspects of your workplace insurance.

To see the changes for yourself, have a browse at **WorkSafeBC.com**.

Maximum wage rate to increase

The maximum wage rate and the maximum coverage for Personal Optional Protection (POP) insurance are increasing effective January 1, 2006. The maximum wage rate — that is, the maximum insurable earnings per worker for the year — will increase to $62,400 per worker in 2006 from $61,300 in 2005, while the maximum allowable POP coverage will increase to $5,200 per month from $5,108.

Keep your account information up to date

Have you changed the way your firm operates? Are you doing business in a new way? Have you moved? Let us know.

Changing your business operations may result in a new classification or a different rate. If you close your business or change your company's name, address, operating location, or type of operation, please contact the Employer Service Centre at your earliest convenience. You can reach the Employer Service Centre from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (PST), Monday through Friday, by calling 604 244-6181 or toll-free at 1 888 922-2768.

If you're changing your firm's contact details, you can also update your account information online.

Visit **WorkSafeBC.com** for details.

Penalties to change in 2006

New tiered structure aims to improve equity

Beginning in March 2006, there will be a new penalty structure for employers who don't report their payroll or pay their premiums as required. The tiered structure will improve equity and consistency and make penalties more straightforward.

Currently, penalties are calculated as a percentage of an employer's actual or estimated assessment. That assessment may change, however, if there are updates or adjustments to the employer's payroll. When the payroll changes, the penalty is recalculated — a process that can be confusing and administratively cumbersome.

The new penalty structure will be based on a sliding scale and includes standard, fixed penalties for both non-reporting of payroll and non-remitting of payments. The minimum penalty will be set at $50 and will increase according to an employer's premiums.

Under the new model, employers who don't make their payments with their quarterly Employer's Remittance Forms (1820 forms) will incur the following non-remitting penalties:

Tier	Quarterly assessment	Penalty amount
1	$0.01 - $1,499.99	$50
2	$1,500 - $4,999.99	$150
3	$5,000 - $9,999.99	$500
4	$10,000 - $49,999.99	$1,000
5	$50,000 - $99,999.99	$3,000
6	$100,000 +	$10,000

Employers who don't report their payroll by the due date on their annual Employer Payroll and Contract Labour Reports (1810 forms) will incur the following non-reporting penalties:

Tier	Annual assessment	Penalty amount
1	$0 - $5,999.99	$50
2	$6,000 - $19,999.99	$150
3	$20,000 - $199,999.99	$500
4	$200,000 +	$1,000

While the new minimum is higher than the current average non-reporting and non-remitting penalty amounts — approximately $44 and $28 respectively — the $50 minimum should help to encourage compliance, thereby increasing equity for all employers who fund the workers' compensation system.

The change to the penalty model follows consultation with employers and other stakeholders.

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WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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